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# THE YELLOW SHEETS

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This spring has been unusually wet, and May still worse. Weeds flourishing in gardens and fields; some crops turning yellow from too much moisture; and weather still cool. Normally our hot weather begins in May, but some days, this month, I have kept a small trash fire going all day. On a recent night,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches of rain fell between dark and dawn.

This continued frequent rains is a matter of embarrassment to me. Frequently orders include wildlings which I do not happen to have at the house, and must go to the woods for them. We have no conveyance hence I must walk. Am not strong enough to carry back with me, more than one water bucket full of plants, with the necessary moss or other insulation needed.

A person who has never made close acquaintance with wild flowers in the wild, can have little idea of how scattered are some. Some wild ones are pretty well everywhere; others only in spots. Now I have never found the blue Cristata Iris on creeks draining toward the west; nor the amethyst colored on creeks draining to the east. They may be, elsewhere in the state, but not around Grannis.

Now a very usual order includes both varieties of Cristatas and Birdsfoot Violets. Plenty of them in these woods, and some times I have plenty at the house of all three. When I do not, that means a trip northeast of town for the blues; due west for the Amethysts, and southwest for the Birdsfoots. No chance to cut across from west to southwest, because of

taut barbed wire fences. I am glad indeed to get the orders and in good weather can fill them promptly; but what sensible person expects a great grandmother to botanize in the rain—plod through swamps (even small ones) ankle deep in muck—or peel off shoes and stockings and wade through cold mountain brooks. At any rate this great grandmother does not. She waits for a clear day when the little swamps are dry enough for secure footing and the brooks are run down enough for crossing on stepping stones. And such fair days have been few and far between this spring. That is why some of my orders have been only partly filled so far.

Some time ago I told of the hard lucky my New Delta Fig trees had encountered—a two weeks wait at the express office because my son had forgotten about the notice. The nearest express office is five miles from Grannis. We finally got them home and set carefully. Came spring, they were about a week later in showing buds than our common Fig, but when once started, are growing like nothing had happened to them. I am much pleased with them.

If your garden plan calls for a great mass of green foliage, try Rhubarb. The roots I got from Mrs. B. A. Asmus are used as a base planting on the south side of the office and are making a handsome showing—even more tropical looking than Elephant Ear. One bloomed this spring and was much admired.

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Of course I have read, for years, of Apple trees trained as cordons, that is to single stem, kept in reaching distance in height, but had always thought of them as freaks. One of my Cambridge friends saves her copies of The Countryman, an English farm magazine, and at intervals sends them to me. I deeply appreciate her kindness. Through this magazine I learn that cordons are used in commercial orchards in England, in rows 3 feet apart and 2 feet apart in the row. Now these are dwarf trees, certain varieties budded onto certain roots, and all side buds pinched off. When proper height is attained, keep top bud pinched.

With our fantastic wages, this would call for too much hand labor to be profitable commercially, but there is many a home with one or more outside jogs which might well shelter one or more Apple cordons. The blooms are beautiful in the spring and ripening fruit decorative later. In many families there is some member who can find the time for the necessary pinching, and the family have some ripe Apples. The fruit would be velvet, for they would pay their way as ornaments.

One of my neighbors here had a Pear tree in his front yard, trained in espalier style. I suspect that his wife did the pinching needed for this style. While she lived, it bore freely as fine Pears as any California Specials. After her death he let the tree grow any way it wanted, and now it bears just ordinary Pears. There are several nursery firms advertising dwarf fruit trees. If you need an ornamental shrub, it would pay to get in touch with them.

Ralph, my youngest son, runs most of this place, but I boss the yard, about 90x100 ft. The east end is a pasture

for Ruth, our beloved milk goat. She has been staked all her life, except occasional sprees when she has managed to get loose and take a bee line for shrubs or plant stands. In the southwest corner is a Black Locust; by the front gate, a tall Yellow Pine; between them a Mimosa, set this spring, a gift from a Texarkana friend; along the north line, a bearing native Persimmon. West end slowly being set with shrubbery. Already includes a Japonica, Spirea van Houttei, Spirea Anthony Waterii, New Delta Fig, common Fig, Gooseberry and native Hazelnut. Hope to add native Service Berry and Sand Cherry. All ornamental.

Summer is time to save food for winter, and present prospects are that all we can save will be needed. According to the newspapers, jars and tin cans for canning will be scarce this year, which is to be expected. So nice to have personal affairs arranged from Washington. But if canning is to be hampered, the sun will shine as usual, not being concerned with New Deal theories, and we can dry fruit. Some will exclaim against this, and from what I've read of weird methods, such as quartering apples, stringing them on threads, and drying them over the cookstove, I do not wonder at the prejudice. But if you cannot can a plenty, do try my Aunt Kate's method of drying Apples and Peaches.

Always choose clear weather. Days that fruit drying was on hand, we rose an hour earlier. Essentials, such as breakfast, milking and feeding the stock, were done, but dishwashing, bed making, etc., had to wait. We used very sharp knives, peeled fruit as thinly as possible, and then sliced just as thin as we could cut. Our dryer con-

sisted of dilapidated bed springs, made clean; supported at a convenient height, and covered with clean flour sacks seamed together.

As small quantities were made ready, they were spread on the rack, one layer deep. We quit by ten o'clock. The frame was covered with mosquito netting to keep out insects, and the thin slices dried rapidly from both sides. The fundamental idea back of drying is the removal of surplus water. By conventional methods, no peeling and fruit in big chunks, this is a slow process. Chemical changes occur which darken the pieces; and the fruit sugar is somewhat changed. When the fruit is peeled and thinly sliced, the process is so fast that these chemical changes do not have time to proceed very far. When cooked the product is but little darker than fresh fruit, and sweeter than the commercially dried.

I believe the fruit would have kept after the one day's drying, but Aunt Kate put it out the second day in rather thicker layers, which she stirred occasionally. The third day it was dumped into a clean flour sack, which was closed and hung all day out in the sun and wind. After that, it was stored for winter.

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Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house; and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it.—Malachi 3:10.

The Lord is waiting and ready to pour out blessings if we will only do our part. Paying tithes, both in spirit and in cash is an important part of our share of the responsibility. We have to

put ourselves in harmony with the laws of being, to get the full benefit of those laws. But like a kind parent, He frequently gives us blessings that we have not earned, and which we emphatically do not appreciate.

I've thought of this promise so often when looking at the weeds in our garden. Most subsoils contain valuable mineral fertilizers locked in such chemical combinations that most plants cannot make use of them. Evidently weeds can to some extent. They take up these minerals, make them over into better combinations, and if properly handled are an important source of fertilizer.

Mostly our ground has been too wet to hoe, but I get out and pull weeds. Whenever I try to have a pit compost heap, my step-daughter promptly fills the pit with rocks and trash, so I collect leaky wash tubs and stand them out back. About half a bushel of leaf mat goes in first. Then weeds, carefully stood on end with roots in the air until safely dead; wood ashes; manure from the chicken coops and stable; more weeds; dead leaves, etc. The stuff slowly settles and more is added. Next year, a layer of rotted compost from an older collection will be added and this tub planted. Commercial fertilizer is used when planting. Next year, contents of tub will be ready for use. The weeds are certainly treasure trove for a gardener, but this year, the Lord is pouring out more of this variety of blessing than I can use.

## HARDY ROCK GARDEN PLANTS

HARDY SEDUMS. All Sedums I call hardy can survive 15 below zero without protection. Some of them are hardy in the sub-Arctic. Most are fine for rock garden plants. Last year my

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Sempervivums made almost no increase. This year most are "hatching" chicks, and when my backlog of orders left from last year are filled, I hope to have a number of varieties of hardy Semps to offer. There is a rock garden plant par excellence. Most of the dwarf plants listed under other heads, and many of the wildlings, are also good for rock gardens.

I have wholesale quantities of the following Sedums: Sarmentosum, hardy to subarctic, pendant effect. One sent me Glaucum, much like album, but different flowers and winter coloring; Album white flowers; evergreen with us, an album hybrid has never bloomed for me, color of foliage slightly different, a grey green one which I think is altissimum, good in rock garden, dish garden or as a pot plant; Acre and Sexanfulare much alike but different, both dwarf and good ground cover for clayey spots; Maximoiczi, little known in U.S.A.—two varieties which are in dispute among the botanists who have seen them. The dealer from whom I bought them identified them as the rare pink-flowered Stoloneferum, and No. 28 as Stoloneferum coccinea; and the faculty of our State Experiment Station at Hope, Ark., agrees with him. Other botanists just as well posted say that both are unusual Spurium hybrids.

Have from one to a dozen plants of other varieties. Will trade, plant for plant, any Sedum listed for starts of red or purple. Have had both and put them out in the yard where Bermuda grass killed them.

Any Sedum listed, labeled to the best of my knowledge, 5c.

Seven well-rooted, small clumps, all different, labeled to the best of my knowledge, 25c, postpaid.

If selection is left to me, 50 well-rooted Sedums, 10 varieties labeled, \$1.00.

If unlabeled, 1c each in lot of 25.

CONFEDERATE VIOLETS, grey effect, thrive in poor soil and can stand more sun than others.

WHITE VIOLETS, force easily for late winter blooming IF you can keep mice away from the tiny buds.

Wooly Violets, dwarf, very early. Full sun and poor soil.

A red Violet, mid season. Needs moderate shade.

Birdsfoot Violet, dwarf, very early. Full sun and poor soil.

Wood Sorrell (wild Oxalis) attractive, edible foliage, early flowering, very hardy.

Blue and gold Iris cristata. Needs some shade. Will soon be up.

Amethyst Iris cristata, needs same conditions as the other, but is especially good for wall gardens.

Virginia Creeper, well known vine. Deep red in fall.

Five Fingers (Potentilla) small vine with some medicinal value. Found growing among rocks. Blooms in early summer.

Christmas Fern, 2½ ft. tall. Green through the winter with us, becoming shabby in the spring. Needs shade. Good for base plantings on north side of house. Very hardy, 10c.

Ebony Spleenwort Fern, also green through winter, and unsightly in the spring. About 18 in. tall. Very hardy. Can stand more sun than the Christmas Fern, and often found growing in cracks of rocks and among roots of hardwood trees, 10c.

Blunt Lobed Woodsia Fern, often found growing with the Ebony Spleenwort. Same conditions. Dies



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down in winter, 10c.

Occasionally find three varieties of Botrychiums; the Virginia Grape and the Ternate Grape Fern, and a third, still later which, so far, have not been able to identify. They are very rare here and I cannot promise positively to find one, 10c each.

The above is true of the Resurrection Fern (*Polypodium polypody*). No wonder it is very dwarf, with such a name, 10c.

Lady Ferns. These grow quite tall. Die down in winter. Said to be able to thrive in considerable drouth, but I find them near water, 10c.

Braken, the dry land Fern. Needs a little shade, 10c.

Wood Betony (*Betonia*). Good ground cover for deep shade. Fern-like leaves, deep red when the first come through. Yellow blooms, good stems for cutting.

Red Tradescantia, so called from the winter color of the leaves. Mother plants I brought in from clay bank hillsides, light shade, had deep maroon colored flowers; but only the Lord Himself knows what color they will be in your garden. Anything from bluish white through all the shades of blue and purple to deep maroon, will be entirely normal. One of the native Spiderworts. Very hardy.

I hope to have three varieties of ornamental Pepper plants in season.

Birds Eye, hotter than hot. Good substitute for Tobasco.

Bouquet, small fruits, first green, then cream, then lavender and finally red. All colors on bush at same time. Too hot for me.

Squash Pepper, looks like a little yellow Patty Pan Squash. Same garden effect as a Giant yellow Marigold. Still

too hot for me.

Am planting a variety of seeds and will be able to tell you more about them later.

### HARDY CACTI—10c EACH

OPUNTIA VULGARE (Common Prickly Pear) hardy, flower creamy yellow, fruit edible. Can be used as pot plant. Thrives in poor soil.

OPUNTIA VASEYI, hardy on the Colorado desert.

OPUNTIA ROBUSTA, stately lawn plant, hardy here to 15 below.

OPUNTIA RAMOSISSIMA, hardy and dwarf, good in full sun in rock gardens, also good as pot plant.

An almost spineless Opuntia found here in only one spot that I know of. May be Beaver Tail.

Any of the above plants 5c each, unless otherwise noted.

### HOUSE PLANTS

Common Green Leaf Wandering Jew, 5c.

Large Green Leaf Wandering Jew, 5c.

Peanut Cactus (*Chamecerus Sylvestris*), 10c.

Opuntia Vilyi (dwarf tender), 10c. Opuntia, either elata or subelata, not sure which, 10c.

Cactus Echinopsis, 10c.  
(When the babies are big enough).

Unless otherwise stated, all plants whose prices are not given, are 5c each. Postage paid on orders of 50c or more. For less than that amount, please add 5c.

Until income is bigger, the Yellow Sheets will be published bi-monthly; and until my cubs are home from the war, more attention will be paid to unusual plants, many from other lands, than to our wildlings.

**CLASSIFIED ADS**

1c per word one insertion. Three insertions for the cost of two. Numbers and initials count as words.

When answering ads, please mention that you saw their ad in The Yellow Sheets.

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Colo. Seeds, Dormants, Berries and Shrubs will be delivered in September; Iris, etc., July to October. Arizona Cactus, Polnis, Orange and Citrus Trees, and Tropical Plants and Seeds. Cash Only. Will take orders for a nursery. Free Lists.

Have Pot-Holders, Hot-Pads, Small Porch Rugs to trade. Mrs. B. A. Asmus, Ft. Lupton, Colo., c/o J. W. Weber.

**I AM A CRIPPLED SHUT-IN.** I collect stamps as a hobby. Please send me some of your duplicates. I Thank You! Charles Wolfram, 11514 South Broadway, Los Angeles 3, Calif.

**SPECIAL.** Fifteen varieties of year-old perennial plants for one dollar. Less than seven cents apiece. All varieties good. Orders filled from May until November. A. W. Freeland, Rt. 1, Box 92A, Guilford, Conn.

**BUTTON MUMS,** 4 colors; Shrimp Plume; Elephant Ear; pink vine; 4 kinds of Water Pool plants; 6 kinds of Vine Seeds; any of above 5c each.

10 Kinds of Vines; 4 kinds of Cannas; Gold Band Snake Plant; mixed Glads; 4 colors perennial Verbenas; 10c each, large.

Iris 5c; others 10c. Coleus; 25 kinds wild fancy Fern 5c and 2 for 5c, extra large 15c.

Please send postage. No orders for less than \$2.

Cuttings of all kinds 2 for 5c. Rainbow Moss, Midget Jew, border variegated Turena, all 5c each. Mrs. J. P. Lynch, Box 96, San Antonio, Fla.

